

Project HIRE Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can **Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) customers** be served by a Project HIRE Contractor?

DSB customers cannot receive services through the DVR Project HIRE contracts. The Project HIRE contracts that DVR has are designed to serve only DVR customers who are in need of and ready for rapid job placement. DSB also has ARRA funding and has separate mechanisms for using these funds. If a DSB Customer seeks services from a Project HIRE Contractor, the Contractor would need to negotiate a separate contract with DSB.

2. May individuals with disabilities who are **working but not employed full time** be served by a Project HIRE Contractor?

Individuals with disabilities who are working but not employed full time could be served through Project HIRE, if they haven't been successful in getting employed in their vocational goal field, have the skills and/or training for high demand occupations, and are ready to go to work full time.

3. The Project HIRE contract says the focus is on “**new**” **customers**. What about **former/closed DVR customers**?

Former DVR customers would be considered “new” to Project HIRE and could be served through Project HIRE. The contractor should consult with VR liaison in cases where the individual has been served by DVR in the past.

DVR maintains case records on all former customers through its case management system - STARS. **Therefore, some of the Project HIRE referral forms would not need to be completed.** In these cases, the contractor would need to submit a modified referral packet to DVR and the DVR Counselor would determine if the individual would be best served through Project HIRE or the regular DVR program. The customer's preference for being served through Project HIRE or the regular DVR program would be considered.

4. Can Project HIRE serve someone who is working full time and secure in their current employment but **wants to get a higher paying job**?

No. These individuals would be served by the regular DVR program.

5. Can Project Hire serve individuals who are **currently employed but have received notice of termination from their job**?

Yes, they could be served by Project HIRE provided the individual is not being terminated for performance reasons. The person must also qualify for mid-to-high salary range jobs in the high demand occupational sector.

Otherwise, they would be served through the regular DVR program.

6. What is “**full time?**” For example, full time in the service sector is often defined as anything 30 hours or more.

Full time is defined in Project HIRE as working 35 hours per week or more.

7. What about “Green Jobs?” Do placements have to be in a “green” job?

The contract is silent on “green jobs” and does not define the term. Initially, one Project HIRE contractor’s main focus was on “green jobs” but their focus has since broadened. There is nothing to preclude a contractor from focusing on “green jobs” if they choose; but it is not a requirement of the contract. If “green jobs” are the focus of a contractor they still must be full-time, mid-to-high wages with benefits, and in high demand occupations.

8. Can a contractor make use of OJT in their placements as an incentive to hire?

Yes. OJT and Internships are OK. These placements remain, however, the full responsibility of the contractor, WIA or other resource and are paid through contract funding. The **DVR OJT and Internship Programs** are not being included in Project HIRE.

9. Our contract is due to start on August 1st. Will it run the full 6 months?

All Contracts at this time are for 9 months. This contracting timeline was established to facilitate the contractor’s required job placement outcomes which must occur within the first six months and to ensure the contractor continues to support the customer’s placement until the case is closed successfully Rehabilitated three months after becoming employed.

10. What about needs of the customer for reasonable **accommodation?** **Who pays for this?**

The Contractor is required by the contract to provide reasonable accommodations, including interpreters and/or assistive technology. Plus, the Contractor is expected to coach the employer on how to provide reasonable accommodations. If a customer requires reasonable accommodations that exceed the Contractor’s financial resources and/or expertise, the contract requires the Contractor to cease serving the individual and refer the Customer back to the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to be served through the regular DVR program.

11. What about **current customers** who are completing educational programs and fit the description of the target population for the Project Hire contracts? Can they be referred to the contractor for inclusion in the contract?

If a current DVR Customer otherwise meets Project HIRE criteria, is in Application or Eligibility status, and DVR has not spent money on diagnostics, evaluations or assessments (money spent on obtaining medical records is allowed), the individual may be referred by DVR to the Project HIRE Contractor for consideration. The DVR Supervisor must

notify the Contractor of the potential candidate and the Contractor must meet with the individual to see if the Contractor agrees. If there is agreement, the customer would be designated by the DVR Counselor as a Project HIRE case. The Project HIRE Contractor will assist the customer in completing the Employment Goal Worksheet which is submitted to the DVR Counselor for development of the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

12. Our contractor is targeting recent community college graduates who have disabilities and Veterans with disabilities. Does DVR have any outreach obligations with these two populations for Project HIRE purposes?

All Project HIRE outreach is the responsibility of the Contractor. However, one potential referral resource that DVR is aware of is the significant number of former successfully rehabilitated customers who are currently receiving unemployment insurance. DVR will contact these individuals to let them know of Project HIRE and refer them to the local Project HIRE Contractor for consideration.